REMARKS

An excess claim fee payment letter is submitted herewith for ten (10) excess total claims and one (1) excess independent claim.

Claims 1-5, 12, and 32-67 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claims 1-5 and 12 have been amended to define more clearly the features of the present invention and to make editorial changes. Claims 32-67 have been added to provide more varied protection for the invention and to claim additional features of the invention. Claims 6-11 and 13-31 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicants specifically state that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Claims 1, 6, 11, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Claims 1-31 stand rejected on prior art grounds.

With respect to the prior art rejections, claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masek (U.S. Patent No. 5,272,749) in view of Enzmann et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,320,946; hereinafter "Enzmann"). Claims 3 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masek in view of Enzmann and further in view of Slithered (U.S. Patent No. 5,479,494). Claims 11-18 and 22-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Riskin (U.S. Patent No. 4,817,129).

These rejections are respectfully traversed in the following discussion.

I. THE CLAIMED INVENTION

The claimed invention is directed to an improved calling procedure including a method for connecting a user to a telephone number.

In an illustrative, non-limiting embodiment of the present application, as defined by independent claim 1, a method for connecting a user to a telephone number, including receiving a phone address entered by a caller, determining an entry modality, from a plurality of entry modalities, used by the caller to enter the received phone address, decoding the received phone address according to the determined entry modality, consulting a reference table using the decoded phone address, the reference table being periodically updated by a centralized master reference table, and connecting the caller to the telephone number that results from the step of consulting the reference table.

In another exemplary embodiment of the present application, as defined by independent claim 12, a system for determining telephone numbers includes a memory including program code stored therein and a processor connected to the memory for carrying out instructions in accordance with stored program code. The program code, when executed by the processor, causes the processor to receive from a caller an ambiguous phone address, select an ambiguity resolving parameter from a plurality of ambiguity resolving parameters, collect additional information specified by the selected ambiguity resolving parameter, and determine, using the additional information, whether the phone address resolves to a telephone number.

Conventional telephone numbers for North American domestic calling typically consist of seven digits plus a three digit area code. However, a string of seven seemingly random digits is difficult to remember because there is no apparent logical connection between a called party and the string of digits that constitutes the party's number. One solution has been to use the

alphabet characters listed on the keys of the telephone's keypad to enter mnemonics. However, the availability of possible mnemonics is severely limited because there are only seven digits in the telephone number and more than one letter corresponds to each digit, among other reasons.

Other conventional methods include providing directory assistance to callers. However, this system also has drawbacks because it can be expensive, time consuming, and may require the user to know certain information, such as the full name of the party and/or the city where the party resides, among other things.

The claimed invention, on the other hand, provides a method for an improved calling procedure that is capable of determining an entry modality from a plurality of entry modalities, thereby being capable of receiving phone address, which may include a plurality of numbers, letters, phrases, sounds, handwriting entries, or sequences thereof. Thus, while the claimed invention is capable of receiving conventional seven digit telephone numbers, the claimed invention also is capable of distinguishing between different entry modalities from a plurality of entry modalities, such a voice, keypad, telephone keypad, alphanumeric keyboard, and handwriting entry modalities, and then decoding the phone address of the party being called according to the determined entry modality (e.g., see specification at page 3, lines 9-14).

Moreover, the claimed invention is capable of resolving ambiguities between a plurality of parties corresponding to the same phone address, or a restricted party corresponding to one phone address by selecting an ambiguity resolving parameter form a plurality of ambiguity resolving parameters (e.g., see specification at page 3, lines 14-20).

II. CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112, SECOND PARAGRAPH

Claims 1, 6, 11, and 12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1 and 12 are amended to provide proper antecedent basis. Claims 6 and 11 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

III. THE PRIOR ART REJECTIONS

A. Claims 1, 2, 4-7, 9, 10, and 19-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masek in view of Enzmann.

Independent claim 1 recites, *inter alia* "determining an entry modality, from a plurality of entry modalities, used by said caller to enter the received phone address" and "decoding said received phone address according to the determined entry modality" (emphasis added).

The Office Action alleges that Masek discloses "*determining special feature access (i.e., the entry modality) used by said caller to enter the received phone address*" (citing Masek at column 9, lines 3-6 and 27-29).

However, Masek only discloses a single entry modality (i.e., "dialing"). That is, Masek does not disclose or suggest "determining an entry modality, from a plurality of entry modalities, used by said caller to enter the received phone address", as claimed in claim 1.

On the contrary, since Masek discloses "dialing" as the sole entry modality, Masek does not even discern between entry modalities or determine whether the entry modality is different.

In fact, in contrast to the claimed invention, Masek is primarily concerned with "a switching application", not to a user interface according to the claimed invention (e.g., see Abstract; see also column 1, lines 8-28).

Thus, Masek does not disclose or suggest "determining an entry modality, from a plurality of entry modalities, used by said caller to enter the received phone address", as claimed in claim 1.

Moreover, Enzmann does not make up for the deficiencies of Masek. Indeed, Enzmann is not even relied upon for the teaching of "determining an entry modality".

Instead, Enzmann merely discloses a payphone or coin-operated telephone that functions as an information transmittal device for dispensing user-selected information audibly to the user, for example, via the speaker in the payphone handset (e.g., see Enzmann at Abstract).

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that there are elements of independent claim 1 that are neither disclosed nor suggested by Masek or Enzmann, either alone or in combination, and therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1 and 2-5.

Claims 6, 7, 9, 10, and 19-21 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

B. Claims 3 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Masek in view of Enzmann and further in view of Clitherow.

For reasons similar to those set forth above, neither Masek nor Enzmann, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests all of the recitations of independent claim 1.

Moreover, Clitherow does not make up for the deficiencies of Masek and Enzmann. Indeed, Clitherow is not even relied upon for the teaching of "determining an entry modality".

Instead, Clitherow merely discloses a virtual calling card system in which the caller *dials* "0" followed by a ten-digit telephone number (e.g., see Clitherow at Figure 3, see also column 3, lines 60-65 and column 6, lines 31-34). Thus, Clitherow similarly discloses only one entry modality.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that there are elements of independent claim 1 (from which claim 3 depends) that are neither disclosed nor suggested by Masek, Enzmann, or Clitherow, either alone or in combination.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 3.

Claim 8 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

C. Claims 11-18 and 22-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Riskin.

Independent claim 12 recites, *inter alia*, a processor that is caused to:

> receive from a caller an ambiguous phone address;
> select an ambiguity resolving parameter from a plurality of ambiguity resolving parameters;
> collect additional information specified by said selected ambiguity resolving parameter; and
> determine, using said additional information, whether said phone address resolves to a telephone number (emphasis added).

Riskin, on the other hand, merely resolves duplicates (i.e., same first names) and collision (i.e., two different last names result in the same numeric string)(e.g., see Riskin at Figure 14; see also column 16, lines 37-56). That is, when a duplicate occurs, the computer asks the caller to confirm the last name, and then asks the caller to enter the first name so that it can differentiate between two duplicates. When a collision occurs, the computer asks the caller for the first name without confirming the last name.

In other words, in Riskin, the ambiguity is resolved only by confirming the name of the party being called.

The claimed invention, on the other hand, selects an ambiguity resolving parameter from a plurality of ambiguity resolving parameters and collects additional information specified by the selected ambiguity resolving parameter.

Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that there are elements of independent claim 12 that are neither disclosed nor suggested by Riskin, and therefore, respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of independent claim 12.

Claims 11, 13-18, and 22-31 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

IV. NEW CLAIMS

New claims 32-67 are added to provide more varied protection for the present invention.

Applicants submit that claims 32-67 are allowable for reasons similar to those set forth above.

For example, neither Masek, Enzmann, Clitherow, or Riskin, either alone or in combination, discloses or suggests determining an entry modality from a plurality of entry modalities used by the caller to enter the received phone address, as claimed.

On the other hand, none of the cited references, either alone or in combination, discloses or suggests selecting an ambiguity resolving parameter from a plurality of ambiguity resolving parameters and collecting additional information specified by the selected ambiguity resolving parameter, as claimed.

Thus, Applicants submits that claims 32-67 are patentable over the cited references, alone or in combination, and accordingly, respectfully requests that the Examiner permit claims 32-67 to pass to allowance.

V. FORMALITIES AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-5, 12, and 32-67, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Assignee's Deposit Account No. 50-0510.

Respectfully Submitted,

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